IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (ORIGINAL) An interface connectable as a default host to a peripheral or as a default peripheral to a host, for serial data communication between host and peripheral during a session, and comprising:

automated means for periodically checking a connection by periodically starting a session when connected as a default host and

automated means for periodically checking a connection by periodically requesting a session when connected as a default peripheral.

2. (ORIGINAL) An interface as claimed in claim 1, wherein a session identifies the presence of a connected device.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An interface as claimed in claim 1 or 2, comprising:

a power signal contact; and

at least one data signal contact;

wherein, when connected as a default host, the means for periodically checking a connection is operable to periodically apply a voltage to the power signal contact and receive a response via the data signal contact.

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An interface as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3, comprising

a power signal contact; and

at least one data signal contact;

wherein, when connected as a default peripheral, the means for periodically checking a connection is operable to periodically request a session via the power signal contact and the data signal contact and receive a response via the power signal contact.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An interface as claimed in any preceding claim 1, wherein a session identifies the capabilities of a connected device.

6. (ORIGINAL) An interface, for serial data communication between a host and a peripheral, connectable as a default host or a default peripheral and comprising :

a power signal contact;

at least one data signal contact;

transmission means for repeatedly sending a poll signal via the power signal contact; and

reception means for receiving a reply signal via the power signal contact, if the device is connected as a default peripheral and the data signal contact if the device is connected as a default host.

7. (ORIGINAL) An interface as claimed in claim 6, wherein the poll signals are sent periodically as a train of voltage pulses.

8. (ORIGINAL) An interface as claimed in claim 7, wherein each pulse of the train has a duration greater than 200ms.

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An interface as claimed in claim 7 or 8, the poll signals have a periodicity of the order of 1 Hz such that each pulse of the train is separated from its neighbour by the same duration of the order 1 second.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An interface as claimed in any one of claims 6 to 9, wherein the transmission means is operable to repeatedly send a poll signal only via the power signal contact if the device is connected as a default host.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An interface as claimed in any one of claims 6 to 10, wherein the transmission means is operable to repeatedly send both a first poll signal via the power signal contact and a second poll signal via the data signal contact, if the device is connected as a default peripheral.

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An interface as claimed in any one of claims 6 to 11, further comprising an identifier contact for identifying whether the interface is connected to a peripheral or a host.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An interface as claimed in ~~any one of~~ claims 6 ~~to 12~~, wherein the reply message identifies the presence of connected device.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An interface as claimed in ~~any one of~~ claims 6 ~~to 13~~, wherein a session is started that identifies the capabilities of a connected device.

15. (ORIGINAL) A host interface, for serial data communication between a host and a connected peripheral during a session:
a power signal contact for supplying power to the connected peripheral;
at least one data signal contact for serially communicating data between the host and connected peripheral; and
means for periodically checking the connection to the peripheral comprising:
transmission means for repeatedly sending a poll signal via the power signal contact; and
reception means for receiving a reply signal via the data signal contact.

16. (ORIGINAL) A host interface as claimed in claim 15, arranged to periodically start a session on its own initiative or in response to periodic requests from the connected peripheral.

17. (ORIGINAL) A peripheral interface, for serial data communication between a connected host and a peripheral during a session:
a power signal contact for receiving power from the connected host;
at least one data signal contact for serially communicating data between the connected host and peripheral; and
means for periodically checking the connection to the host comprising:
transmission means for repeatedly sending a first poll signal via the power signal contact and for repeatedly sending a second poll signal via the data signal contact; and
reception means for receiving a reply signal via the power signal contact.

18. (ORIGINAL) A peripheral interface as claimed in claim 17, arranged to periodically request a session.

19. (ORIGINAL) An interface as claimed in claim 18, wherein each request has a duration less than 100ms.

20. (ORIGINAL) A method of checking a serial data connection between a device connected as host and a device connected as a peripheral, comprising:
periodically starting a session at the device connected as host

21. (ORIGINAL) A method of checking a serial data connection between a device connected as host and a device connected as a peripheral, comprising:
periodically requesting the start of a session at the device connected as a peripheral.

22. (ORIGINAL) A method of checking a serial data connection between a dual mode device and another device, comprising:
periodically starting a session at the device connected as host when the dual mode device is connected as a default host; and
periodically requesting the start of a session at the device connected as a peripheral when the dual-mode device is connected a as a default peripheral.

23. (ORIGINAL) An interface connectable as a default host to a peripheral or as a default peripheral to a host, for serial data communication between host and peripheral during a session, and comprising:
a transceiver arranged to periodical checking a connection by periodically starting a session when connected as a default host and by periodically requesting a session when connected as a default peripheral.

24. (ORIGINAL) An interface, for serial data communication between a host and a peripheral, connectable as a default host or a default peripheral and comprising :
a power signal contact;
at least one data signal contact; and

electronic circuitry for repeatedly sending a poll signal via the power signal contact and for receiving a reply signal via the power signal contact, if the device is connected as a default peripheral and via the data signal contact if the device is connected as a default host.

25. (ORIGINAL) A host interface, for serial data communication between a host and a connected peripheral during a session:
a power signal contact for supplying power to the connected peripheral;
at least one data signal contact for serially communicating data between the host and connected peripheral; and
electronic circuitry for periodically checking the connection to the peripheral, wherein the electronic circuitry is arranged to repeatedly send a poll signal via the power signal contact and is arranged to receive a reply signal via the data signal contact.

26. (ORIGINAL) A peripheral interface, for serial data communication between a connected host and a peripheral during a session:
a power signal contact for receiving power from the connected host;
at least one data signal contact for serially communicating data between the connected host and peripheral; and
a electronic circuitry for periodically checking the connection to the host, wherein the electronic circuitry is arranged to repeatedly send a first poll signal via the power signal contact and to repeatedly send a second poll signal via the data signal contact and is arranged to receive a reply signal via the power signal contact.